

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DACCA 06280 140408Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----- 119474 /11

R 140235Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2942
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

S E C R E T DACCA 6280

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, BG, CH
SUBJECT: GENERAL ZIA PLANS TO VISIT THE PRC

1. FOLLOWING A DISCUSSION ON OTHER MATTERS THIS MORNING (DECEMBER 13), FOREIGN SECRETARY TABARAK HUSAIN TOLD ME THAT GENERAL ZIA AND A SMALL PARTY OF SENIOR BDG OFFICIALS WILL VISIT THE PRC PROBABLY BEFORE THE END OF DECEMBER. TABARAK SAID DECEMBER 19 WAS ONE TARGET DATE, BUT THAT THE MATTER OF TIMING IS STILL UNDER DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. HE SAID HE WOULD LET ME KNOW WHEN A FIRM DATE IS CHOSEN AND THAT HE WOULD ALSO INFORM THE EMBASSIES OF INDIA, PAKISTAN AND THE SOVIET UNION AT THAT TIME. THUS FAR, HE HAS TOLD NO ONE ELSE ALTHOUGH HE ASSUMES THAT CHINA MAY HAVE TIPPED OFF PAKISTAN AND THAT INDIA MAY HAVE GOTTEN WORD OF THE VISIT THROUGH INTELLIGENCE SOURCES.

2. TABARAK SAID THAT THE DISCUSSION IN PEKING WOULD BE RELATED TO BILATERAL MATTERS. HE WANTED US AND OTHER COUNTRIES WHEN HE INFORMS THEM TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS VISIT IS NOT DIRECTED AGAINST ANYONE ELSE AND IT WILL NOT BE AT ANYONE ELSE'S

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EXPENSE. I TOLD HIM THAT AS FAR AS WE WERE CONCERNED

AND AS WE HAD PREVIOUSLY SAID, WE FULLY RESPECTED BANGLADESH'S NON-ALIGNED POSITION AND HAD NO QUALMS ABOUT SUCH A VISIT. TABARAK EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THIS AND SAID THE BDG WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SOVIET REACTION. THE SOVIETS ARE ALREADY HOSTILE TOWARD THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT AND ARE PROBABLY SUPPORTING SUBVERSIVE ELEMENTS AGAINST IT. THE BDG WANTS TO AVOID ANY ACTION WHICH WOULD PROVOKE THE SOVIETS INTO AN EVEN GREATER HOSTILITY, BUT AT THE SAME TIME BANGLADESH IS AN INDEPENDENT NATION AND SEES ITS OWN INTERESTS SERVED BY A VISIT TO PEKING AT THIS TIME.

3. COMMENT: WHILE IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT A FEW OTHER DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS HAVE GOTTEN WORD OF THIS VISIT, THERE HAS BEEN NO SPECULATION ABOUT IT IN THE USUAL DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES. ZIA MAY SEE THIS VISIT AS SOMETHING WHICH WILL ENHANCE HIS OWN PRESTIGE, BUT HIS MAJOR MOTIVATION IS PROBABLY TO TRY TO OBTAIN PRC AGREEMENT TO THE SUPPLY OF ADDITIONAL ARMAMENTS. MASTERS

SECRET

NNN

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